

AIDS / HIV

Arizona Department of Corrections
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program
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Aids: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is a disease caused by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV weakens the body's natural defenses, making the person more susceptible to infections. As the body continues to weaken, it can no longer fight off routine or normal infections. Once the virus has significantly destroyed the immune system, the person may be diagnosed with AIDS.

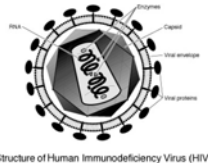
HIV is a virus, which is passed from person to person through one of two ways:

- By having direct sexual contact with someone who is already infected or
- By getting infected blood into your bloodstream.

WHO GETS HIV/AIDS?

Anyone—women, men, and children – can get this disease. All it takes is being exposed to the virus one time. You are at greater risk of getting this virus, if you:

- Are uncertain about your sexual partners' drug and/or sexual past history.
- Have used IV street drugs.
- Have received a "needle stick injury" as a health care worker.
- Have received a transfusion with infected blood.
- Have received a tattoo using shared devices.
- Have been a baby born to an HIV infected mother.



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HIV/AIDS?

When someone becomes infected with the virus they may or may not experience symptoms. If symptoms occur they include the following:

▪ Fatigue	▪ Diarrhea
▪ Constipation	▪ Weight Loss
▪ Fever	▪ Night Sweats
▪ Skin Disorders	▪ Some form of Cancer
▪ Inability to fight common infections(s)	

Do not wait until you develop symptoms to be tested for this virus. A simple blood test can put your mind at ease or get you started on an early treatment plan. If the test comes back positive, you will be diagnosed as having HIV.

WHAT IS HIV POSITIVE?

If a person is diagnosed as HIV positive, there may be NO noticeable symptoms for a number of years. From the very earliest stages of HIV, it is very important for the infected person to do the following:

- ✓ **Avoid** passing the disease to somebody else
- ✓ Take good care of yourself.
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet.
- ✓ Exercise regularly.
- ✓ Receive treatment of minor ailments.
- ✓ Quit smoking or chewing tobacco products.
- ✓ Stop the use of illegal drugs.
- ✓ Abstain from alcohol.



TREATMENT

The healthcare provider will order certain lab tests to check the progression of the infection. As of today there is no cure for HIV / AIDS, but there are a number of drugs available to slow down the progression of HIV and AIDS. You can discuss your treatment plan with your healthcare provider.

REMEMBER: You can be physically affectionate with an HIV-infected person without worrying about getting the virus yourself. Hugging and dry kissing are safe. However, avoid deep, wet, or "French" kissing and do **NOT** share personal items that might carry small amounts of blood – things like toothbrushes and razors.

HIV is a public health disease, **NOT** a punishment for anyone's past. Let's all work together to take care of those who are infected and prevent the spread of this disease to others. Understanding the way the disease is spread is the first step in this process.